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19 October 1965

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Current Situation in the Dominican Republic

1. Violence continues in Santo Domingo. Rival dockworkers' unions fought yesterday over the right to unload a Canadian ship. In the melee, the secretary general of one of the unions was killed and several others were wounded.
2. Government troops, who had entered the former rebel zone earlier in the day with presidential approval to begin a search for illegally held weapons, were drawn into the shooting. Additional troops, backed up by tanks, entered the city in the early evening. A larger force which was prepared to enter the city from San Isidro was ordered by Garcia Godoy to return to its base.
3. By 11:00 pm EDT the US Embassy reported that all was quiet but that downtown residents were in a state of great alarm.
4. The fighting in the waterfront area apparently has delayed until 20 October a plan approved by Garcia Godoy for picking up arms throughout the city. The plan was to have gone into effect at 9:00 am, 18 October--at which time some 1,400 men from the army and navy accompanied by 50 marshals (so-called legal officers)--were to begin a sweep-type operation complete with search warrants. The President's decision to assert the Provisional Government's authority within the former rebel zone may have resulted from a reported threat by Secretary of the Armed Forces Rivera Caninero to withdraw armed forces' support from the provisional regime unless strong action was taken to curb Communist influence.

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5. These events added to the tension created by the killing of Angel Severo Cabral by a Communist-led mob. Cabral was the leader of a rightwing faction of the conservative National Civic Union. On the late afternoon of 15 October, Cabral, his wife, and a daughter had gone to their house in the Ciudad Nueva section of Santo Domingo to retrieve personal effects left behind at the beginning of the revolution.

6. At least some leading Dominican police and military officers believe that Cabral's death is the beginning of a preconceived terrorist plan and will be followed by reprisals against the extreme left.

7. Armed vigilantes had already taken their first organized public action before Cabral's death. On 16 October they moved onto the University of Santo Domingo campus to guard the legitimate university authorities as they met to counter a leftist takeover of the university administration. The twice-postponed meeting strongly backed the governing council in its efforts to recapture the university from an extremist-named council.

8. In reaction, leftist students met on the morning of 17 October and laid plans to arm themselves against a forcible attempt to reinstall the legal rector of the university.

9. Now, integration of rebel military elements located at the 27th of February Camp, outside Santo Domingo, has been stalled by rebel demands. Caamaño is insisting that 283 rebel officers now in the camp be accepted into the armed forces at ranks to which he promoted them during the crisis. Military leaders have refused to accept this demand. Only 55 officers appear to meet the requirement of having been on active duty on 23 April 1965.

10. These recent outbreaks of violence interrupted a two week period in which Garcia-Godoy appeared to be making tangible progress toward solving the critical problem of reintegrating the rebel military and establishing authority of the provisional government in the former rebel sector. Events of the past 72 hours could signal a further breakdown of public order in downtown Santo Domingo and the eruption of

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scattered outbursts of violence in outlying towns. The Dominican military, already restive over what they judge to be Garcia Godoy's too tolerant approach to the rebels, can be counted on to press for rigorous countermeasures and probably will resist further concessions to the rebel military on integration. However, the introduction of regular military units into the former rebel zone may serve to further reassure the military chiefs and conservative factions that Garcia Godoy can be counted on to resist further rebel encroachments against the provisional government's authority.

FORM 12-62 2024

COMPLETED AS UNNUMBERED MEMO ON BOND DATED 19 OCT 1965
OCI - NOTICE OF SPECIAL PAPER

No. 390-65

Date _____

SUBJECT

: Current Situation in the Dominican Republic

STATINTL

REQUESTED BY

: ~~SEC~~ through [REDACTED] *for [REDACTED] 2/12/66*

PURPOSE

: _____

DESIRED LENGTH

: _____

SPECIAL DISSEM

: O-DCI
Cy-Helms _____ GRAPHICS? _____

COORDINATION
OUTSIDE OCI

: Cy-Fitzgerald
Cy-Cline
Cy-OAD/CI _____

ASSIGNED TO

: Cy-MCO _____ DUE DATE: _____

OAD REVIEW

: ~~Cys - Retained by~~ [REDACTED] _____
STATINTL

1. O/DCI _____

4. CS/II _____

6. WA _____

7. AA _____

8. SSBA _____

2. O/DDI _____

5. DAY/SIDO _____

P/A _____

P/A _____

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3. O/ADCI _____

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